

New Testament Survey

Major Themes of the NT

1. Salvation through **Christ** alone
2. **Grace** versus **works**
3. Justification by **faith**
4. The **Kingdom** of God
5. The Scripture as God's **inspired** word
6. Future **judgment** and **reward**

People and Culture of the NT

1. Politics: **Rome** was the backdrop of the NT
 - a. The **Roman Empire** was in power at the time of Jesus' birth
 - b. A Roman decree took Mary and Joseph to **Bethlehem**
 - c. A Roman decree sentenced **Jesus** to **death**
 - d. The Jews paid **taxes** to Rome
2. The Family
 - a. The family was the basic unit of **society**
 - b. Families were **large**
 - c. Families were patriarchal—the **father** was supreme and the mother and children were dependent on him
 - d. Much of a child's **education** was done by the family
 - e. Most religious observances and **worship** was done in the home
 - f. Homes often included **extended** family, **servants**, and other employees
3. Religion
 - a. The Jewish religion was based on **Old Testament** teachings and tradition.
 - b. For many Jews religious life centered around the **synagogue**
 - i. They gathered on the **Sabbath** to worship and learn Scripture
 - ii. It was a center for **education** as well as religion
 - c. Religious holidays
 - i. **Passover**
 - ii. **Pentecost**
 - iii. Feast of **Trumpets** (Rosh Hashanah)
 - iv. Yom **Kippur**
 - v. Feast of **Tabernacles**
 - vi. **Hanukkah**
 - vii. **Purim**
4. Groups
 - a. Pharisees—They were the largest group and paid careful attention to **oral** tradition and the Law of **Moses**. Jesus said they went through the motions and didn't mean what they did.

- b. Sadducees—They were aristocratic and had more **political** power than the Pharisees. They followed only the **Torah** and rejected any belief in an afterlife.
 - c. Zealots—They were a radical political group who opposed **non-Jewish** influences and Roman rule in Israel.
 - d. The Sanhedrin—This was the Jewish **supreme court** and was ruled by the high priest. It was also aristocratic and its **70** members were Sadducees and priests.
5. Language
- a. The NT was written in **Greek**
 - b. Nearly everyone in the Roman Empire spoke Greek
 - c. It was the international language of the **Mediterranean** world